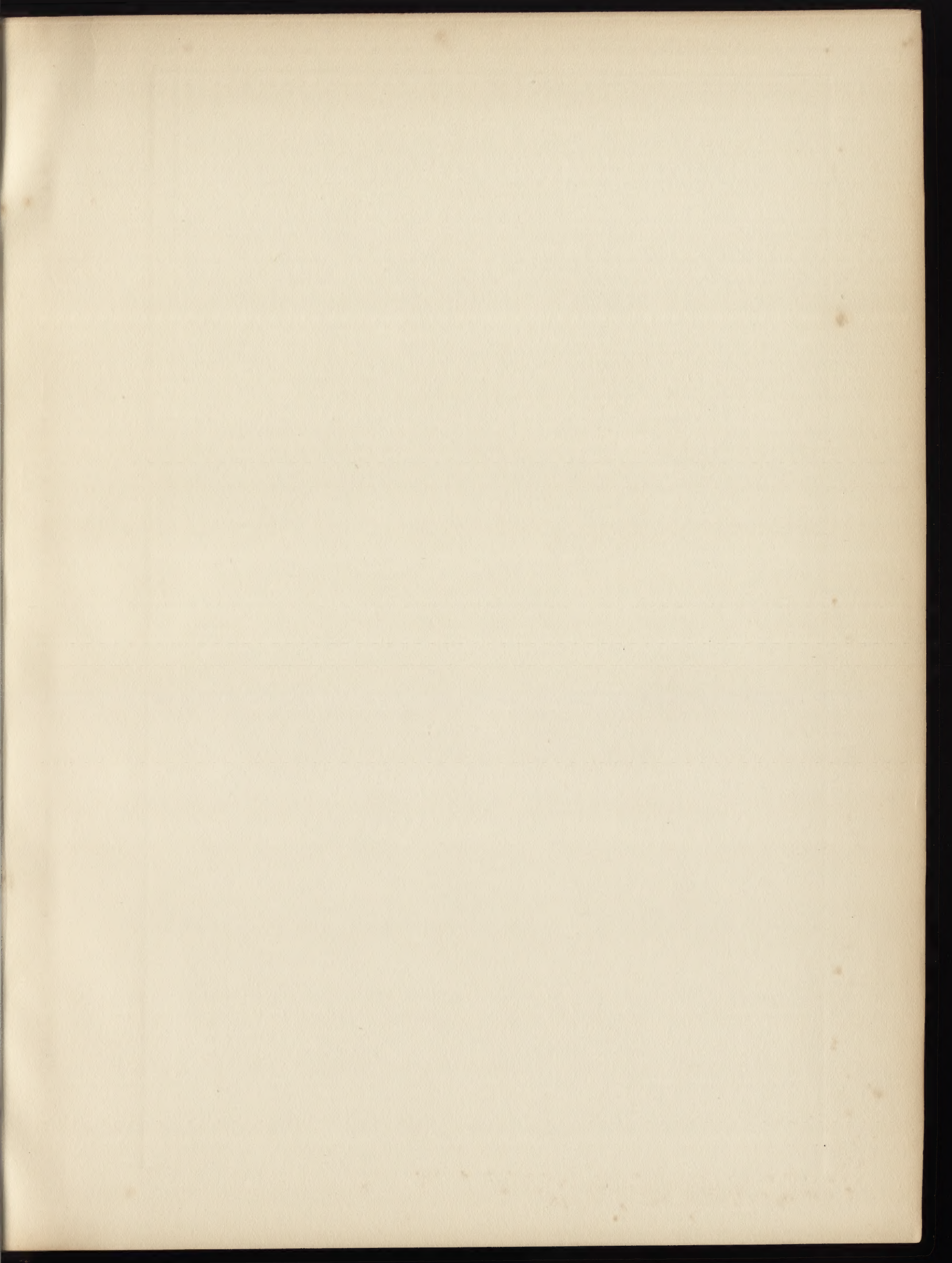


The special edition — limited to 50 copies

E. K. Waterhouse



[Prospectus]

The
Gresleys of Drakelowe

An Account of the Family, and Notes of its
connexions by Marriage and Descent,
from the Norman Conquest
to the present day

With Appendixes and Illustrations

COMPILED BY

FALCONER MADAN, M.A.

FELLOW OF BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION

1897

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[The above divisions are subject to modification in detail.]



THE Gresley family is probably unique in combining a proved succession in the male line from the eleventh century to the present time, with the occupation for the last seven hundred years of a manor which was held by an ancestor at the time of the Domesday Survey. The property and influence of the Gresleys have been almost equally divided between Derbyshire, Staffordshire, and Leicestershire, Drakelow lying in Derbyshire near the point where the three shires meet; and in each they have held a high position. Among the families connected with them by marriage are Astley, Aston, Bakepuiz, Blount, Bowyer, Burdet, Camvile, Churchill, Clarell, Coventry, Darrell, Drummond, Dudley, Dyott, Ferrers, Gernon, Giffard, Grammer, Harpur, Heathcote, Inge, Leigh, Madan, Montfort, Montgomery, Morewood, Mulsho, Proby, Reid, Somerset, Somervile, Stafford, Stanley, Swinnerton, Thorpe, Vavasour, Verdon, Vernon, Vincent, Walcot, Walsh, Walsingham, Wasteneys, Williams, Winter, Wrottesley, and Wynne.

The compiler has endeavoured to unroll the history of the family from documents at Drakelow and in the British Museum, the Public Record Office and the Bodleian Library, with the aid of wills, parish registers, monumental inscriptions, and all available printed matter. Authorities are cited, and attention is drawn to inferences as distinguished from proofs. He has been helped by the extensive and valuable collections of the late Rev. John Morewood Gresley, M.A., Rector of Seile, Leicestershire—who evidently contemplated some such book as the present—and by Mr. Jeayes' recent *Descriptive Catalogue of Gresley Charters*, as well as by papers in the possession of the Dowager Lady Gresley, and of Charles Gresley, Esq., of the Close at Lichfield.

The present head of the family, Sir Robert Gresley, Bart., of Drakelow, gives his personal help and support to the scheme.



Terms of Subscription

THE volume will be an octavo of about 300 to 350 pages, bound in cloth. The number of illustrations must depend to some extent on the list of subscribers, but it is hoped and expected that there will be at least a view of Drakelow, facsimiles of early seals, and one other plate, as well as a map and pedigree.

The price to subscribers will be £1, and if the book be eventually published it will not be sold for the first five years for less than 26s. net. The William Salt Society has agreed to take a copy for each of its members at the reduced price of 10s. 6d. for unbound copies.

There will be a special edition in quarto, limited to fifty copies, with extra illustrations, partly from family pictures at Drakelow, the Gresley jewel, coats of arms, facsimiles, &c., and suitably bound. The price of these copies will be three guineas.

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^c R.S. lx.
2. 386.

^d Ibid. 562.

^e Prerog. Ct.
of Cant.

^f Ibid., and
Bodl. Dodsw.
xxii. 90^v from
York Reg.

^g but see
Index Libr. x.
239.

^h Staff.
Visitn., 1583,
Nichols.

others received a commission^e to provide archers from Derbyshire for service in Brittany against France. Twice he was Sheriff of Staffordshire (5 Hen. VII = 1489-90, and 13 Hen. VII = 1497-8), and on the former occasion, in Mich. T. 1490, received £100 by writ of Privy Seal^d as a reward for services as Sheriff. His will is dated 'Jan. 25, 1503^e,' and was proved on 'Apr. 26, 1503^f': on the whole it is probable that the former date represents 150 $\frac{1}{2}$, on this occasion, and not 150 $\frac{3}{4}$ ^g. His body was to be buried before the High Altar at Gresley Priory, and there are several bequests to that house.

His wife was **Anne**^h, daughter of Sir Thomas Ferrers, of Tamworth Castle, she being a first cousin of her husband's step-mother (see p. above). It is interesting to see the ancient connexion between the families of Gresley and Ferrers thus renewed. She was alive on April 26, 1503, when she proved her husband's will. Their issue was:—

William (eldest son), see p. .

John (second son), born in 1481 or 1482, a clerk in Holy Orders, made Rector of Colton in 1498ⁱ. In 1499 he, being then aged 17, received a papal dispensation to hold benefices without stint, but resigned the rectory in the following year^j; and on April 12, 1512, was presented to the living of Norton in Hales, co. Salop^k. A John Gresley took the degrees of B.Civ.L. and B.Can.L. at Oxford on July 8, 1507, and was Warden of Ruthin Hospital, co. Denbigh, in 1512: one of the same names 'of Stapnell' helped to draw up an inventory of Anne Gresley's goods in 1555, see p. .

George (third son), see p. .

Robert (fourth son) occurs as a trustee^k on Feb. 10, 1510^l; and in 10 Hen. VIII (1518-9) received the manors of Kethorpe and Donisthorpe^l from his brother George. It appears that he was married and had a son George, for the will of dame Katharine Gresley, his sister-in-law, dated 1572, and proved in 1574 (see p.), mentions 'George Greisley, son to Robert Greisley': a George Gresley also was buried at Gresley cum Membris^m on October 8, 1591. Robert, not being mentioned in the will, was probably dead in 1572.

James (fifth son) does not occur in the Derbyshire Visitations, but is known as the defendant in two law-suits, one in 11 Hen. 8 (1519-20)ⁿ about lands at Scropton, co. Derby, &c., the other in 23 Hen. 8 (1531-2)

ⁿ Duc. Lanc.
i. 194.

^k Gr. Charter,
463.

^l Harland
Ch. 83.

^m Gresl. Reg.

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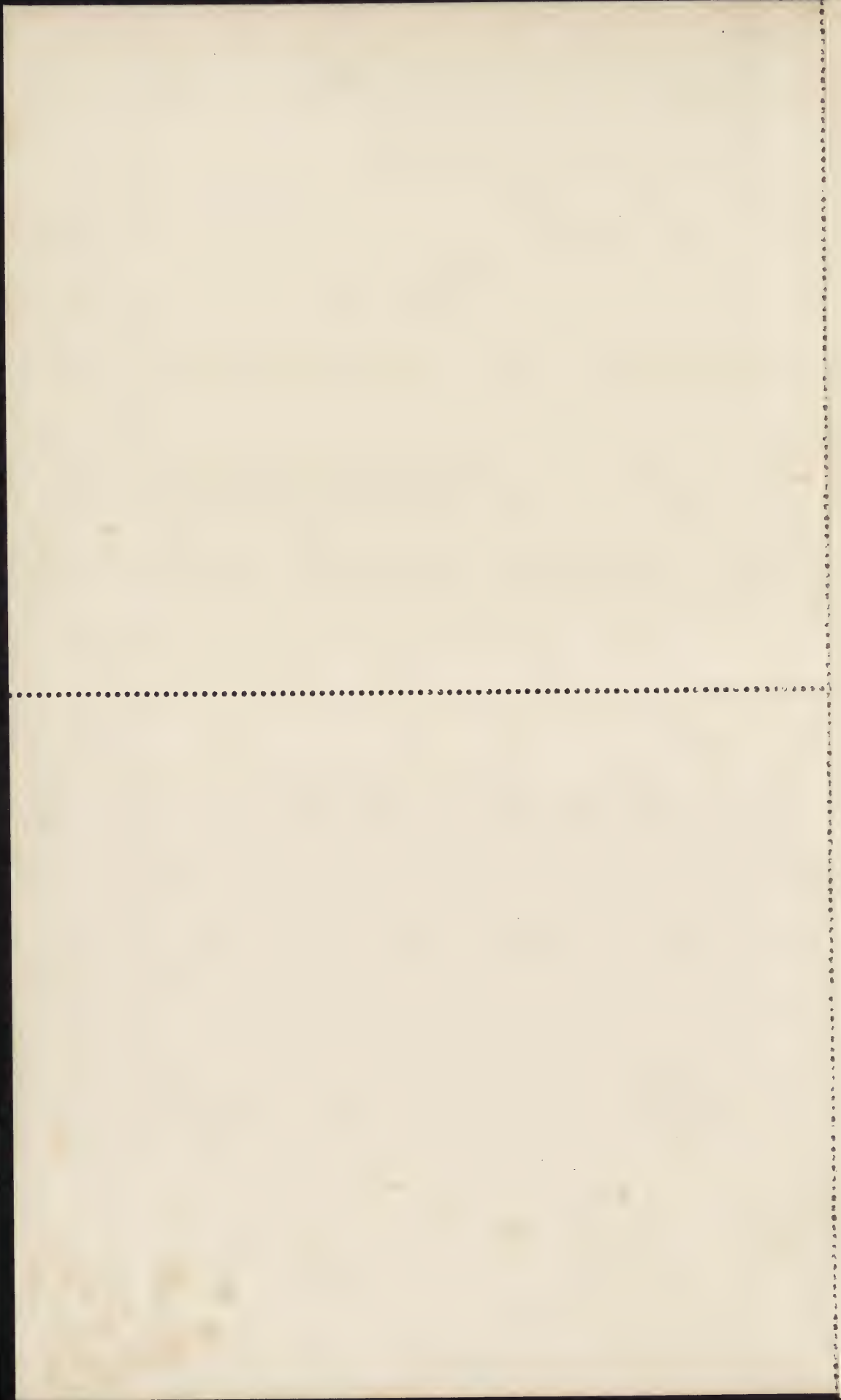
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Oxford

HORACE HART, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

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1899

Meliorè Fide quam Fortuna

GRESLEY MOTTO.

More Faithful than Fortunate.

IN what old story far away,
In what great action is enshrined,
The sad sweet motto which to-day
Around the Gresleys' name is twined?

Was it for country or for crown
They played a grand tho' tragic part?
Or did they lay their fortune down
To strive to win one careless heart?

We cannot tell: but this we know,
That they who chose in that dim past
Those noble words—come weal come woe—
Stood by them stedfast to the last.

And this we feel, when deep in dust
Lie earthly hopes and worldly state,
In that far Land where all is just,
The *Faithful* will be *Fortunate*.

FLORENCE SEVERNE.

1889.

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PREFACE

THE present volume is the best description which the author is able to give of the successive generations of a remarkable family. An ideal family history would require historical genius in the writer, leisure for research, a lavish outlay, and plentiful material. In the present instance the last of these conditions is the only one of which fulfilment can be claimed. The late Rev. John Morewood Gresley, a trained antiquary, amassed a large number of Gresley records from authentic sources, and the contemplation of these, late in the year 1895, was the cause of the present endeavour to raise a memorial both of Mr. Gresley's labours and of the ancient family to which he belonged.

The Gresley family is perhaps unique in combining a proved succession in the male line from the eleventh century to the present time with the occupation for the last seven hundred years of a manor which was held by an ancestor at the time of the Domesday Survey. The property and influence of the Gresleys have been almost equally divided between Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Leicestershire, Drakelow lying in Derbyshire near the point where the three shires meet; and in each they have held a high position and have formed connexions by marriage with the leading families. Their antiquity and local fixity have attracted the attention of Sir Henry Ellis (*Introd. to Domesday* i. 346-7), the Rev. R. W. Eyton (*Salt Society's publications* i. 223), and other antiquaries: while, if the link with the Norman family of Toeni holds good, the pedigree in the male line is continuous for nine hundred years.

The story begins with the prominent Norman family of Toeni, the head of which was hereditary Standard-bearer of the Dukes of Normandy. At the Battle of Hastings, however, Ralph de Toeni asked permission to fight in the ranks, and his services and those of his brother, Robert de Stafford, were rewarded with broad lands in England after the Conquest. A Nigel de Stafford who also appears as an extensive landowner at the time of the Domesday Survey, was in all probability the son of Robert, and was certainly the father of the first who bore the name of Gresley. The curious legend of the Devil of Drakelow supplies the reason why the family name was Gresley rather than Drakelow.

The Gresleys thenceforward seem to have lived for some years at Gresley Castle, and, as holding their lands *in capite*, ranked among the *Barones minores*. They took their full share of military service as knights: indeed one generation, the family of Sir Peter, was so exceedingly militant as to deserve a less honourable appellation. The family steadily increased in wealth until a marriage with the heiress of the Wastenys of Colton, in the middle of the fourteenth century, raised it to a leading position in the county—a position retained more by diplomacy than force through the Wars of the Roses. In Elizabeth's time the head of the family incurred debts which caused the sale of Colton and several other manors, and the baronetcy conferred on Sir George Gresley in 1611 was not accompanied by any retrieval of these losses. In the Civil War the first Baronet was a Parliamentarian, but his grandson, Sir Thomas, was in favour after the Restoration, and by his marriage recovered an important part of the property which had been sold at the beginning of the century.

At this point the family divides into two branches, the eldest son William carrying on the line of Baronets and residing at Drakelow, while the younger, Thomas, became the progenitor of a line of Squires and Rectors of Seile, residing at Nether Seile. In 1837 however, with Sir Roger Gresley, the elder branch died out, and the Rector of Seile

at that time, who was Sir Roger's first and fourth cousin, became the ninth Baronet, and was the grandfather of the present Baronet, Sir Robert, whose two sons augur well for the continuance of this wonderful pedigree.

The present volume is not published. Every member of the William Salt Archæological Society receives a copy of the ordinary edition, as do subscribers before issue, a list of whom is subjoined. The special edition is limited to fifty copies, which have all been subscribed for.

The author has to offer his best thanks to many welcome helpers. The present head of the family, Sir Robert Gresley, Baronet, of Drakelow, Burton on Trent, has taken a warm personal interest in the scheme, and has himself contributed chapter VIII; and Major-General the Hon. George Wrottesley, who is the life and soul of the William Salt Society and an indefatigable historian, has given most valuable help, especially in the earlier chapters: while Mr. J. Horace Round, Lord Hawkesbury, Miss Agnes Gresley of Barton under Needwood, Mr. Nigel Gresley (for the Australian branch) and Miss Govett (for the Bristol Gresleys), with others too numerous to mention, have supplied valuable information.

Notes and criticisms of the present book will be gladly received, in view of the possible issue of a few pages of Addenda at some later period.

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Major-Gen. the Hon. GEORGE WROTTESEY, 75 Cadogan Gardens, London, S.W.

Ὅπου ποτ' ἄν ὦσιν ἄνδρες,
... ἔνταῦθα τείχη καὶ πόλεις.

ARISTIDES.

The Knights' bones are dust,
And their good swords rust;
Their souls are with the Saints, we trust.

COLERIDGE.



Peter de Gresley

Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate I

SIR PETER DE GRESLEY

d. about A.D. 1310

(From Brit. Mus. MS. Harl. 4205, fol. 112, of the 15th cent. : see p. 43)





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate II

SIR GEORGE GRESLEY, K.B.

d. 1548

(By Taddeo Zuccherò)

Handwritten: 1548

Handwritten: 1548





Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate III

CATHERINE (ASTON), WIFE OF SIR WILLIAM GRESLEY
d. 1585

*Catherine (Aston) Gresley
(1585-1585)*



Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate IV

CATHERINE (WALSINGHAM), WIFE OF SIR THOMAS GRESLEY

d. 1585

bound: 158-159

1971 sale (538)



Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate V

WALSINGHAM GRESLEY, YOUNGER BROTHER OF THE 1ST BARONET

d. 1633

(By Cornelius Jansen)

Book. 29 "x 24 1/2"

1, 1/2 1/2 (80%)





Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate VI

SIR GEORGE GRESLEY, 1ST BARONET
d. 1651

Wood: 42" x 29"

1931 sale (500) at 2000

Sold Christie's 29 Jan 1943 (37)
27 Jan 1983 (100)





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate VII

KING JAMES I
d. 1625

Wood: 22" x 17"

1931. 1. 1. 1891





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate VIII

THOMAS GRESLEY, SON OF THE 1ST AND FATHER OF THE
2ND BARONET
d. 1642

29" x 23"

1731 (1720/1740) a. 2nd ed. 1642





Gresleys of Drakelow

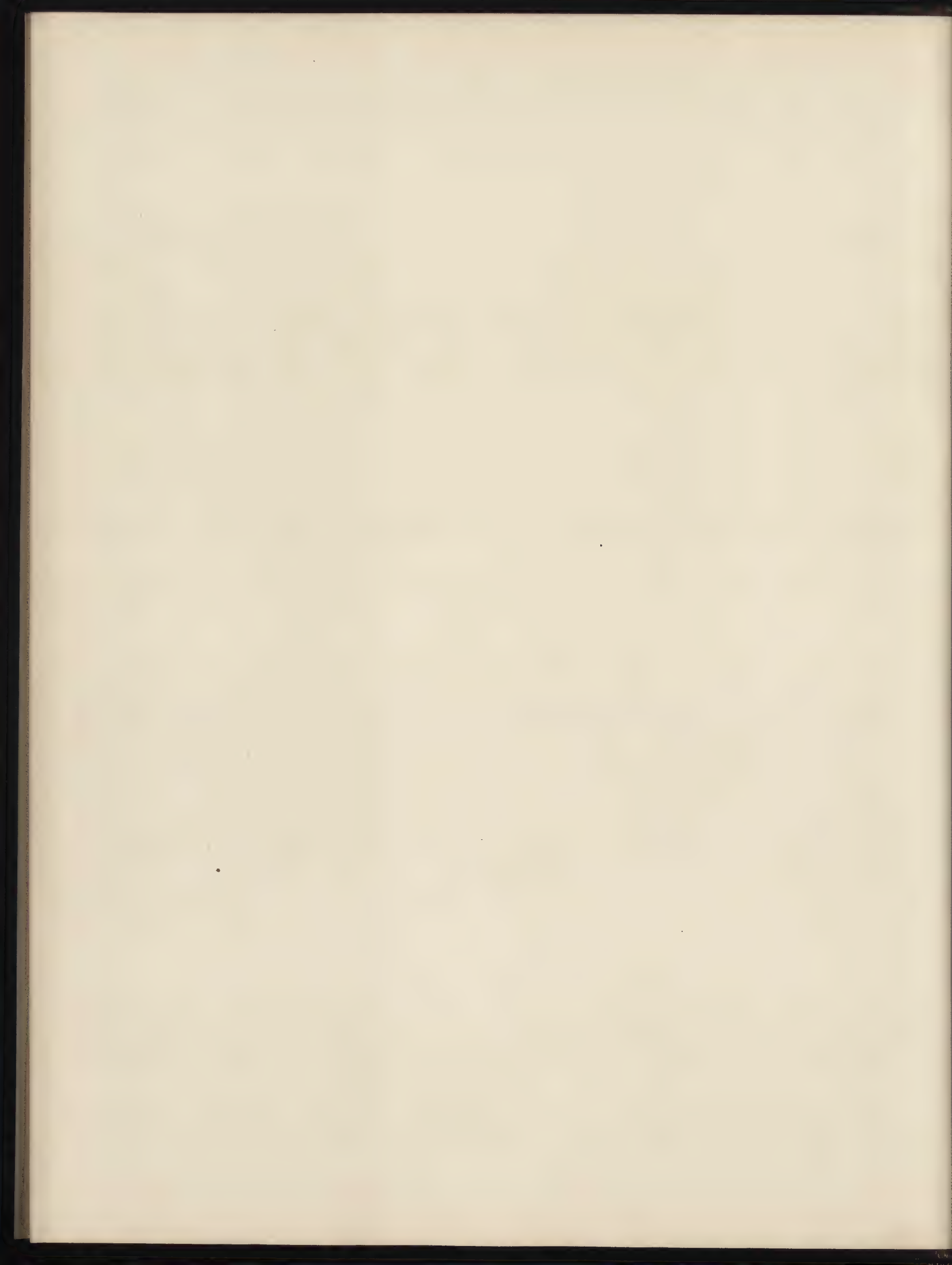
Plate IX

BRIDGET (BURDET), WIFE OF THOMAS GRESLEY, ELDEST SON OF
THE 1ST BARONET
d. 1685

29" x 32"

1931 Sale / 80 / in Van Pinner







Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate XI

SIR WILLIAM GRESLEY, 3RD BARONET
d. 1710



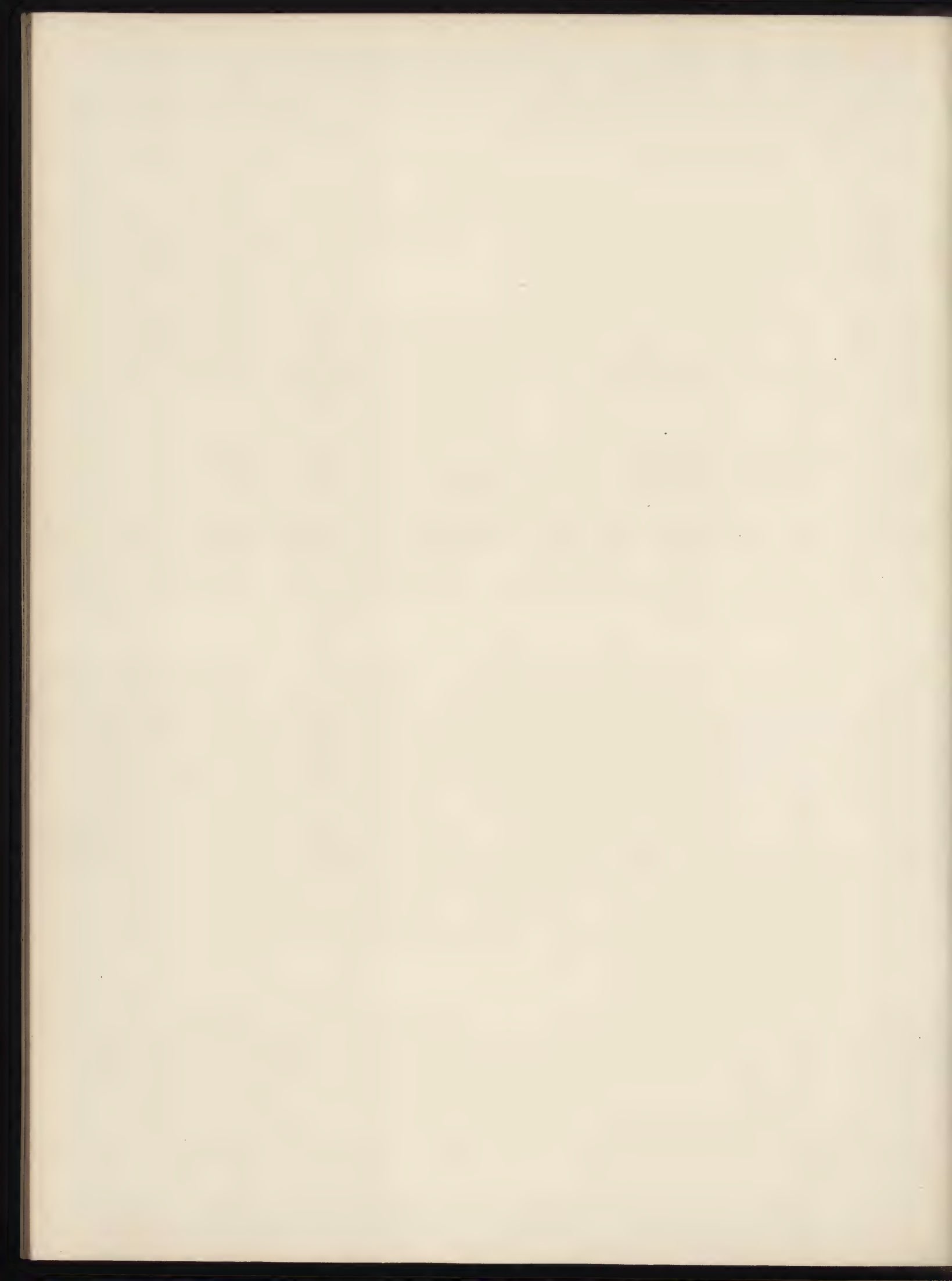
Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate XII

THOMAS GRESLEY OF NETHER SEILE, 2ND SON OF THE
2ND BARONET

d. 1743

(The identity of this picture is uncertain)





Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate XIII

SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, 4TH BARONET
d. 1746





Gresleys of Drakelowe

SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, 5TH BARONET
d. 1753

Plate XIV

29 1/2" x 23"

1931 sale (Gresley) at 1844
from sale of 1844/1845



Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate XV

SIR NIGEL GRESLEY, 6TH BARONET
d. 1787

57. 14. 1914

W. from Lexington, 1943 & 1944
Nat. Museum, Wash. D.C.





Graeys of Drakelowe

Plate XVI

ELIZABETH (WYNN), WIFE OF THE 6TH BARONET
d. 1793

1931 cat. (Bib.) as H. P. B. B. B.





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XVII

ANNE (GRESLEY), LADY HEATHCOTE

d. 1797

(From a Miniature)



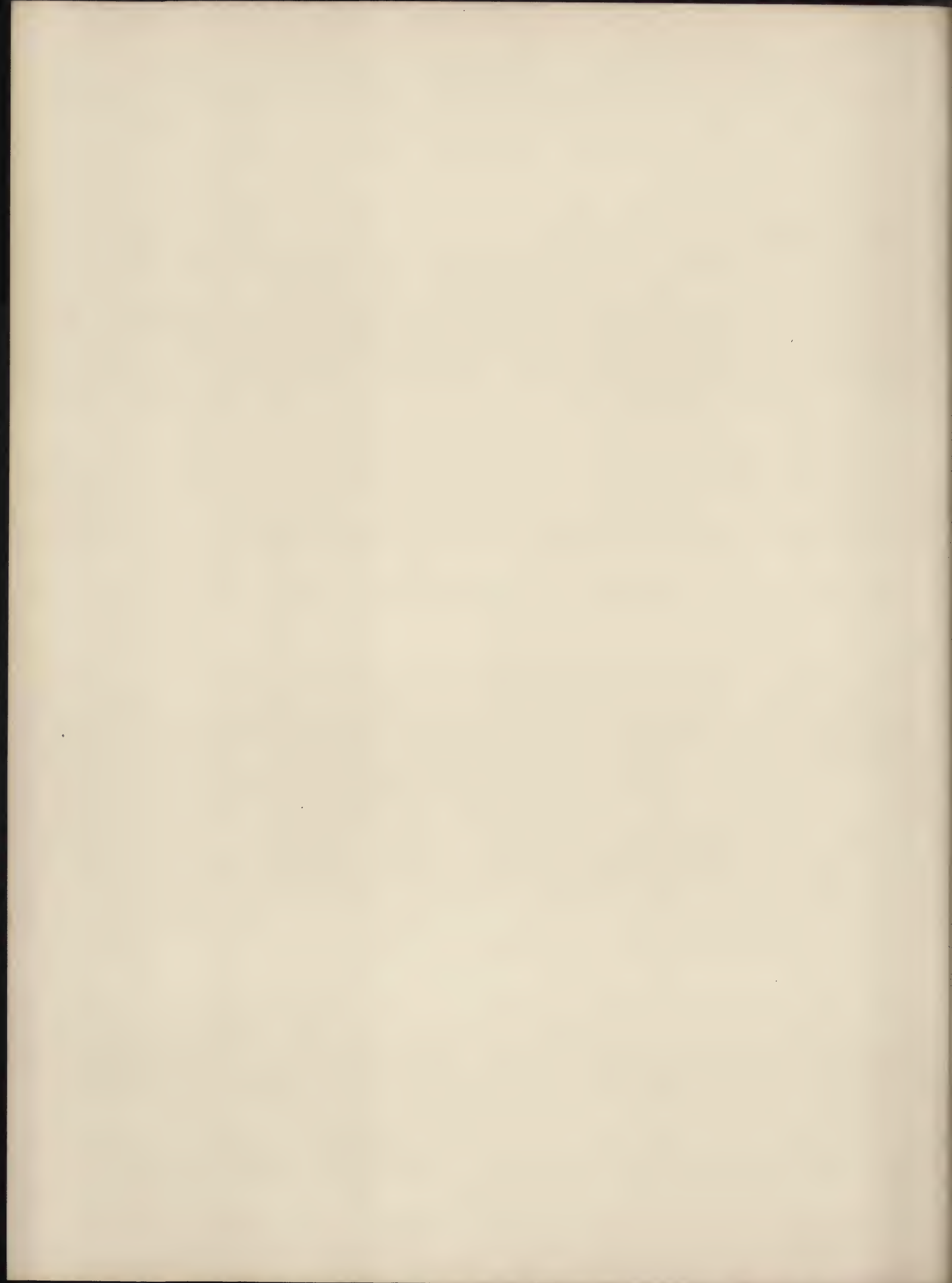


Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate XVIII

ELIZABETH (VINCENT), WIFE OF DR. THOMAS GRESLEY,
OF NETHER SEILE
d. 1769

(By Sir Joshua Reynolds)





Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate XIX

SIR NIGEL BOWYER GRESLEY, 7TH BARONET
d. 1808

35 1/2" x 27"

1911 photo (H.M.) in J.H. Smith

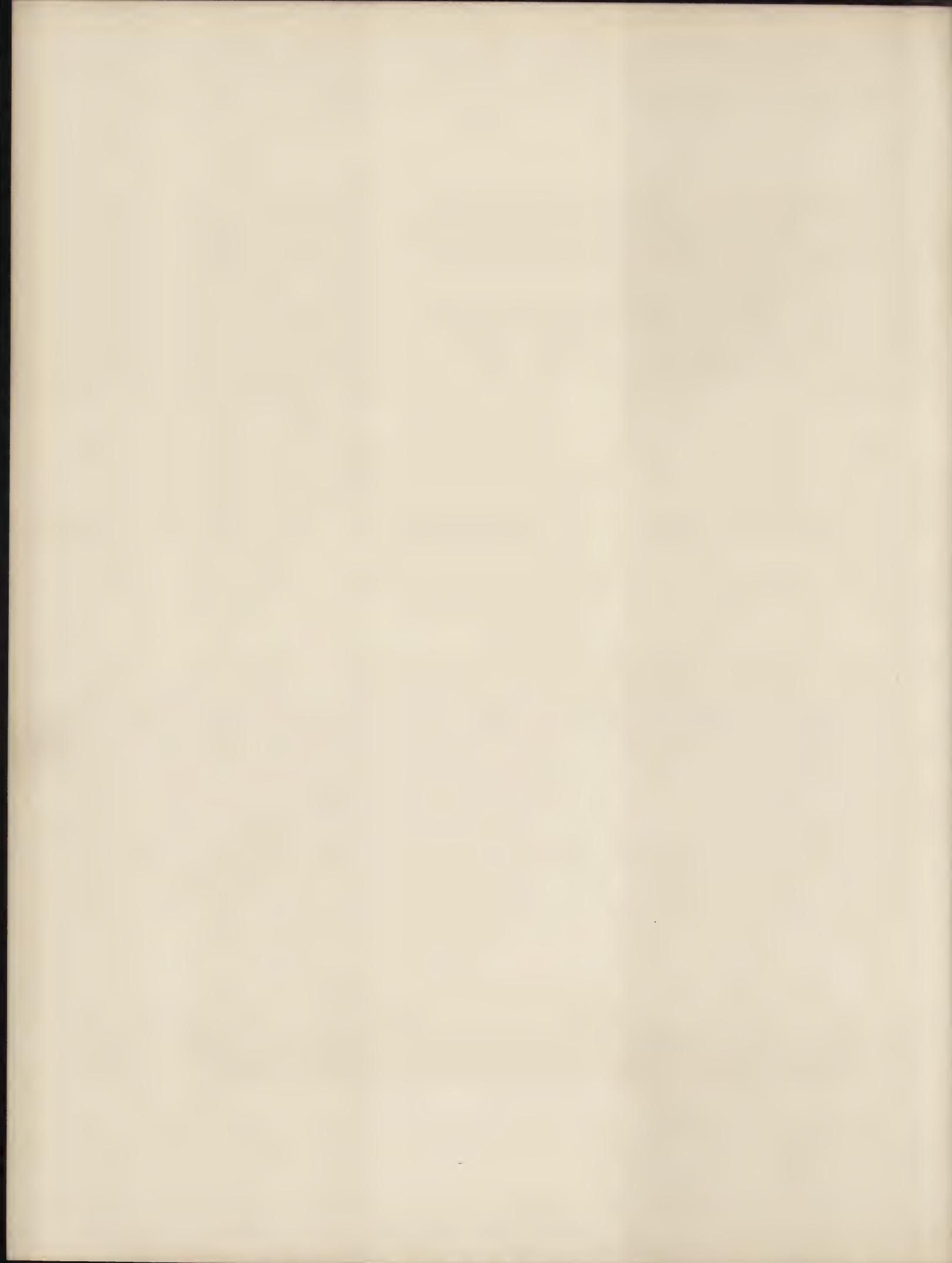




Plate XX

DRAKELOWE

(From the South-west: the river front on left)

Gresleys of Drakeelowe





Gresleys of Drakelowe

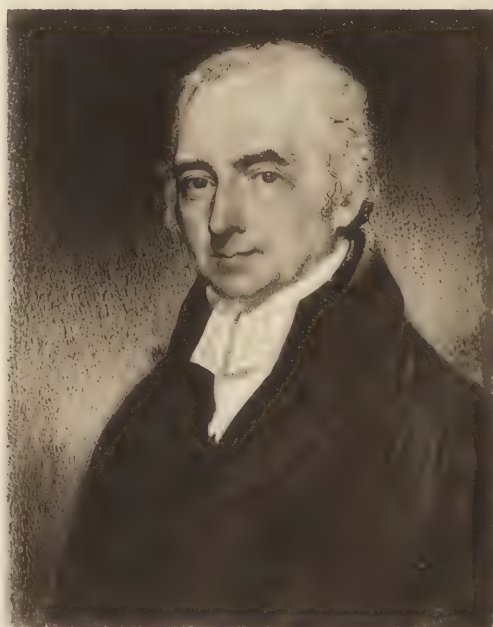
Plate XXI

WILMOT (GRESLEY), DAUGHTER OF THE 5TH BARONET,
WIFE OF THE 7TH BARONET

d. 1790

(By Sir Joshua Reynolds)





Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate XXII

REV. WILLIAM GRESLEY OF NETHER SEILE
d. 1829





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XXVIII

LOUISA JANE GRESLEY (d. 1806) AND HER NIECES, MRS. LEVETT AND LADY HEATHCOTE



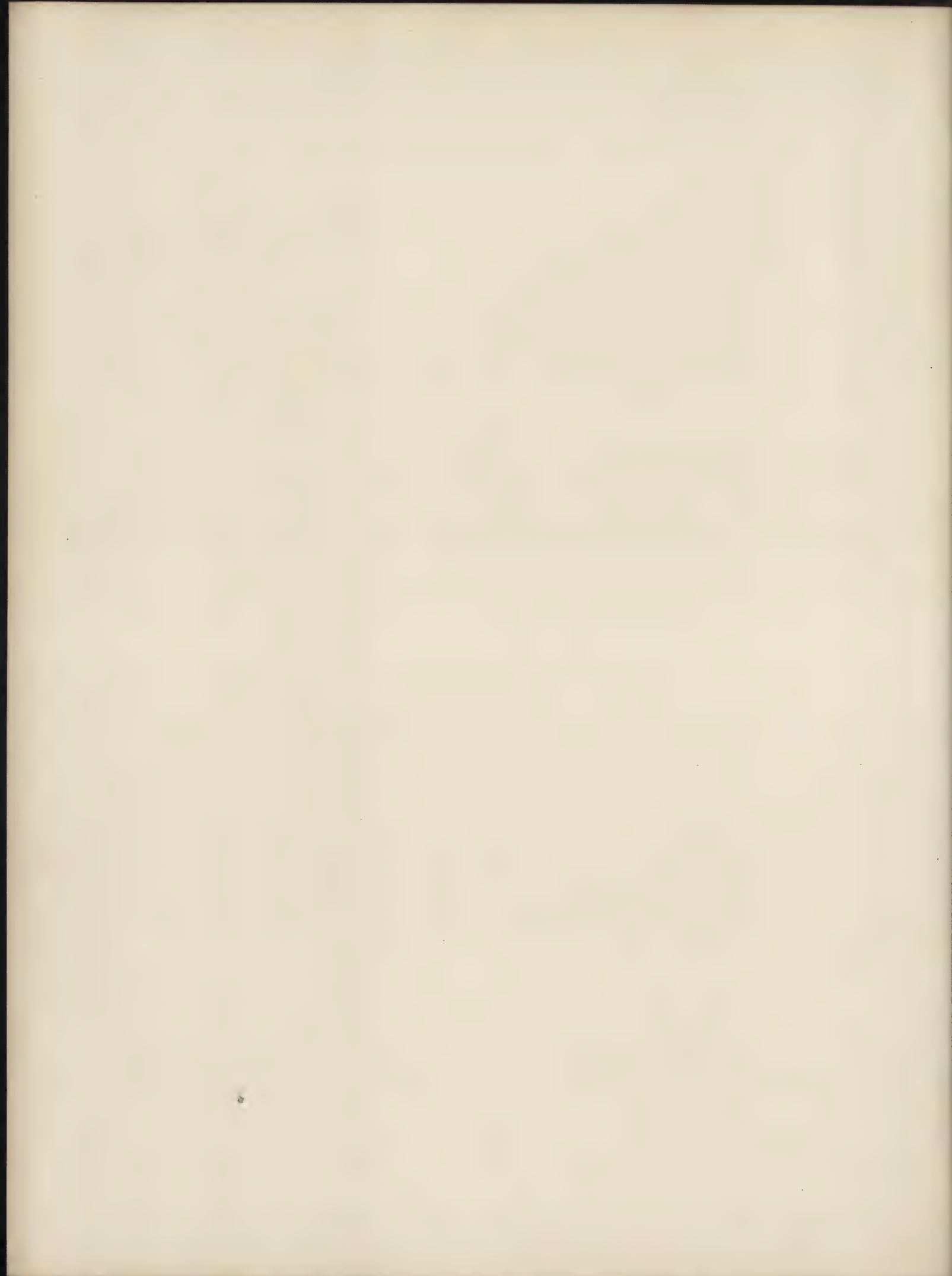


Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate XXIV

LOUISA ELIZABETH (GRESLEY), MRS. MADAN
d. 1861

(From a Miniature)





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XXV

SIR ROGER GRESLEY, 8TH BARONET
d. 1837





Gresleys of Drakelowe Plate XXVI
SIR ROGER GRESLEY, 8TH BARONET
d. 1837



Gresleys of Drakelowe Plate XXVII
THE LADY SOPHIA (COVENTRY), WIFE
OF THE 8TH BARONET
d. 1875





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XXVIII

THE REV. SIR WILLIAM NIGEL GRESLEY
9TH BARONET
d. 1847

(From Miniatures)



Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XXIX

GEORGINA ANN (REID), LADY GRESLEY
WIFE OF THE 9TH BARONET





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XXX

SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, 10TH BARONET
d. 1868





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XXXI

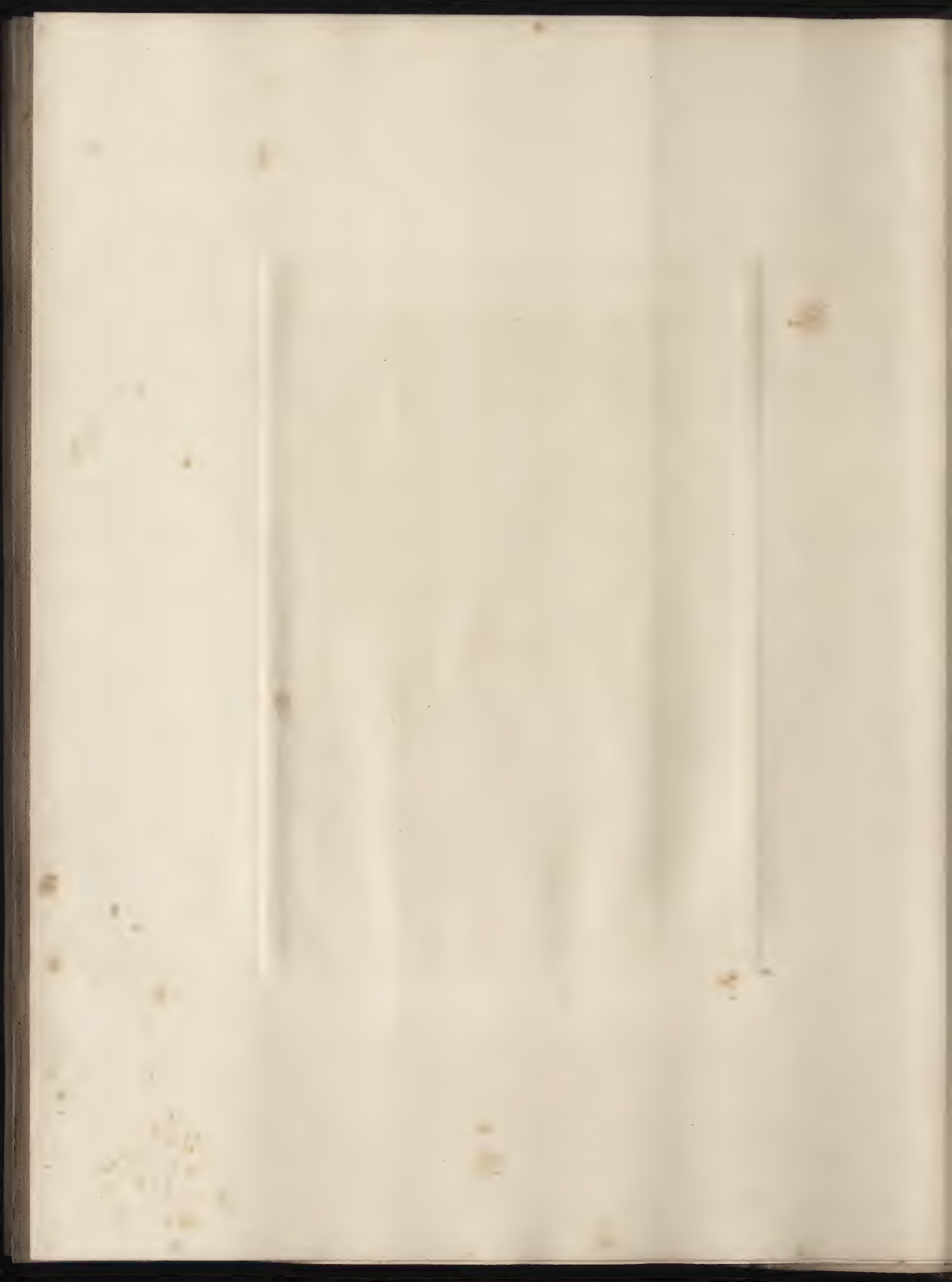
LAURA ANN (WILLIAMS), LADY GRESLEY, WIFE OF THE
10TH BARONET



Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XXXII

SIR ROBERT GRESLEY, 11TH BARONET





Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XXXIII

THE LADY FRANCES GRESLEY, NÉE SPENCER-CHURCHILL
WIFE OF THE IITH BARONET





Gresleys of Drakeelowe

DRAKELOWE
From the South-east

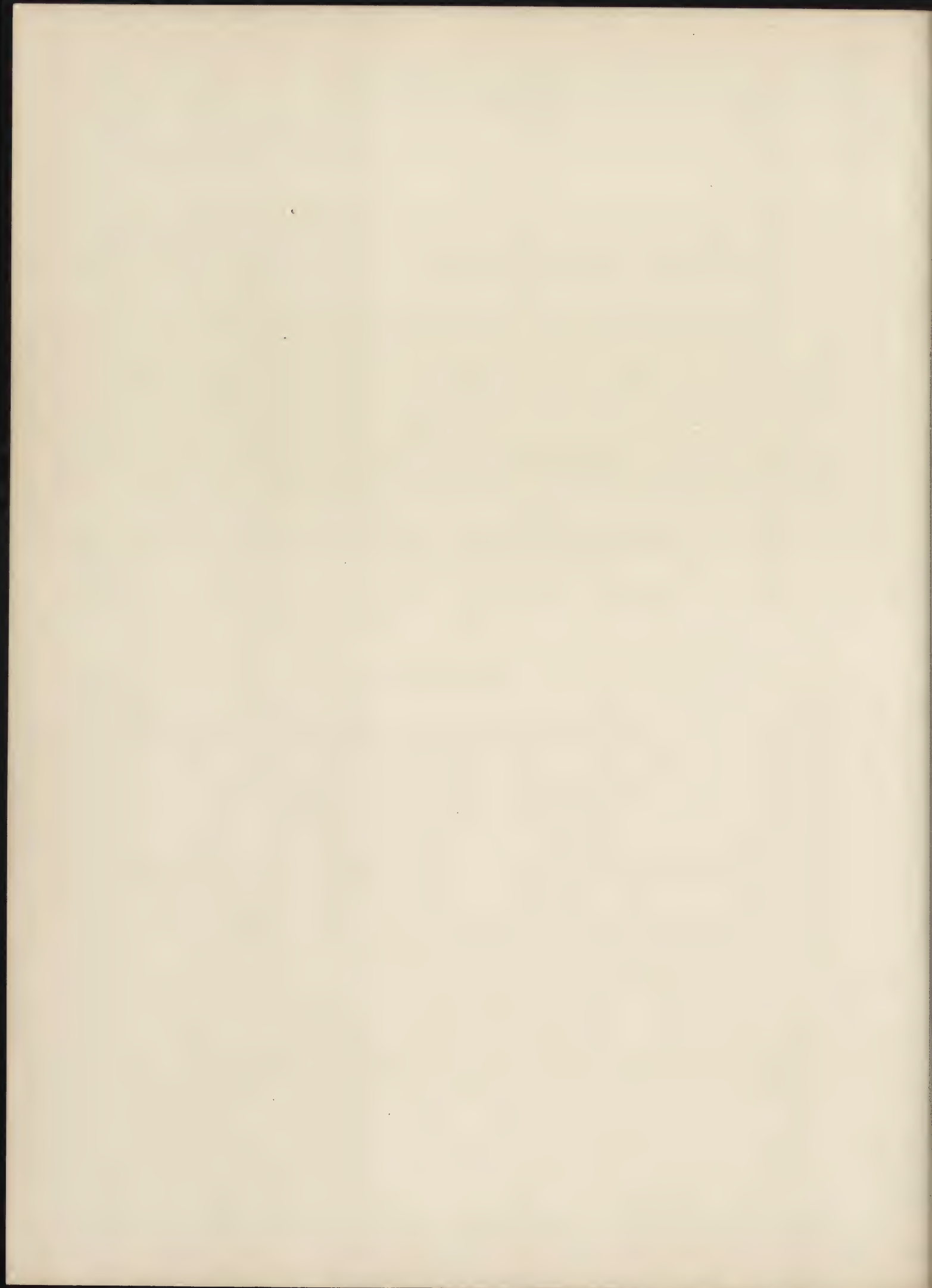




Gravestys of Drakehowe

DRAKELOWE

Entrance gate and grass walk in garden (from the West)





Gresleys of Drakehowe

DRAKELOWE

Entrance gate and grass walk in garden (from the East)

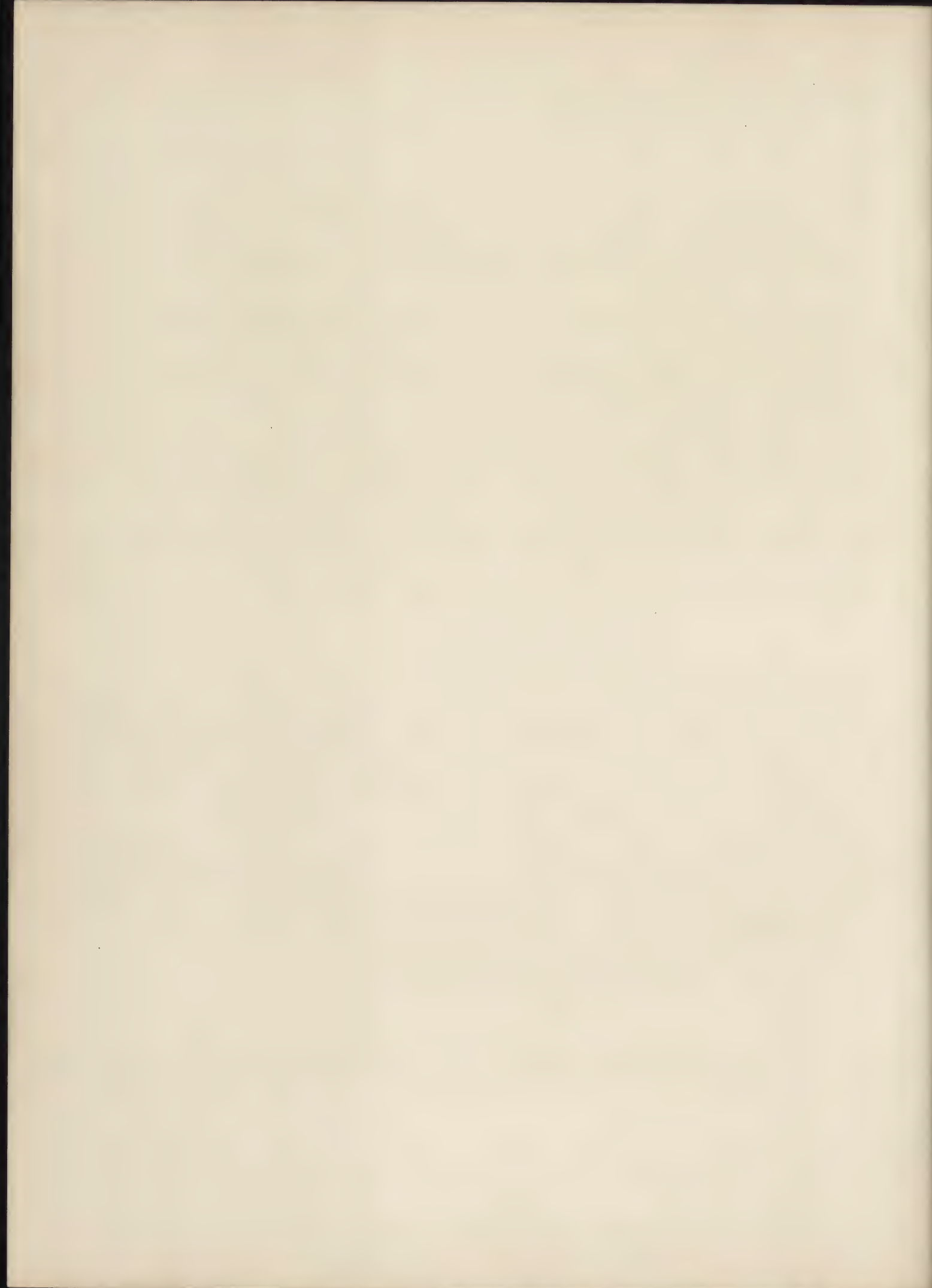


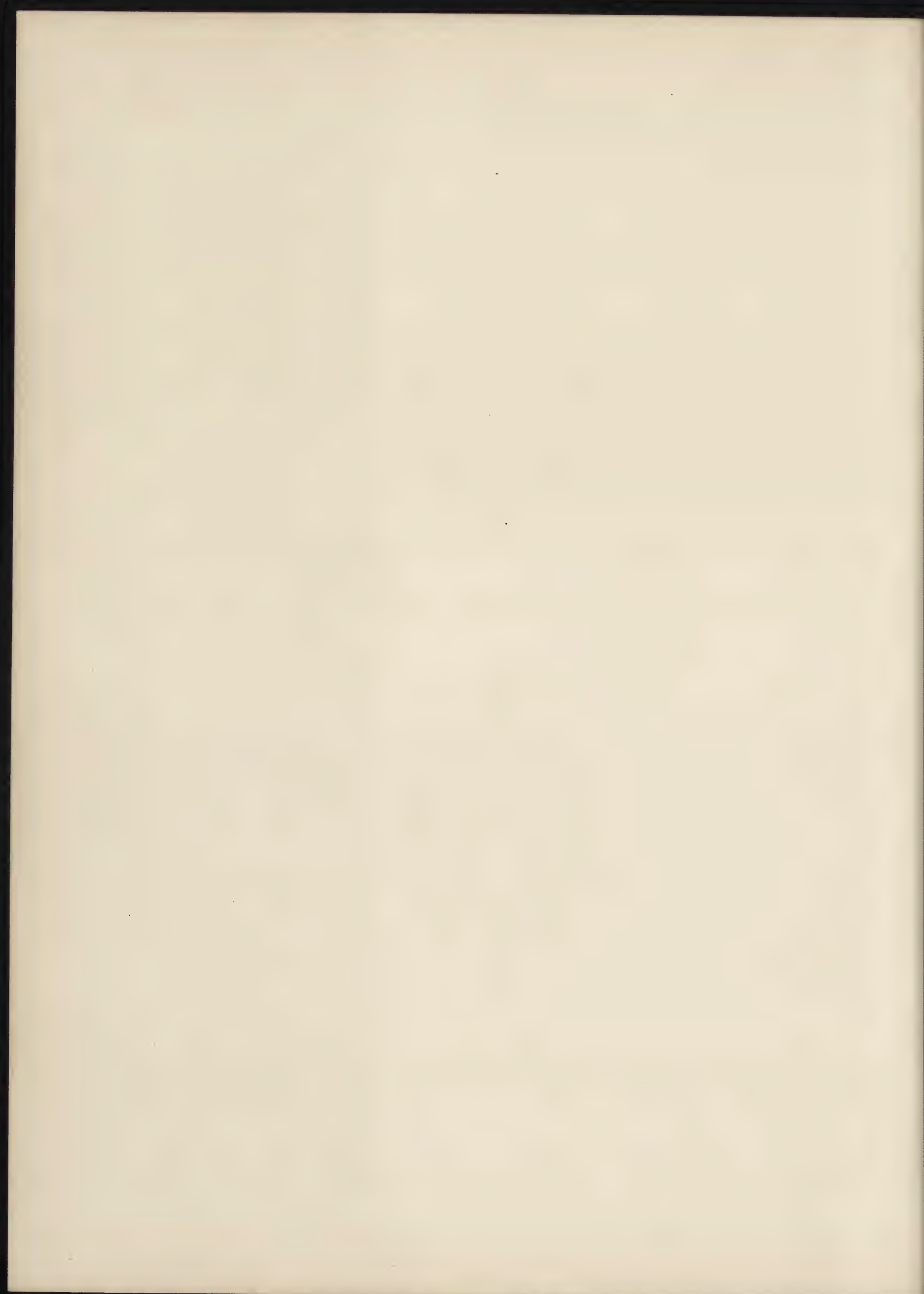


Plate XXVII

DRAKELOWE
(Dining Room)

Greskys of Drake Lowe

Painted and wall paper installed in
Victorian Museum (1948)





Gresleys of Drakelow

Plate XXXVIII

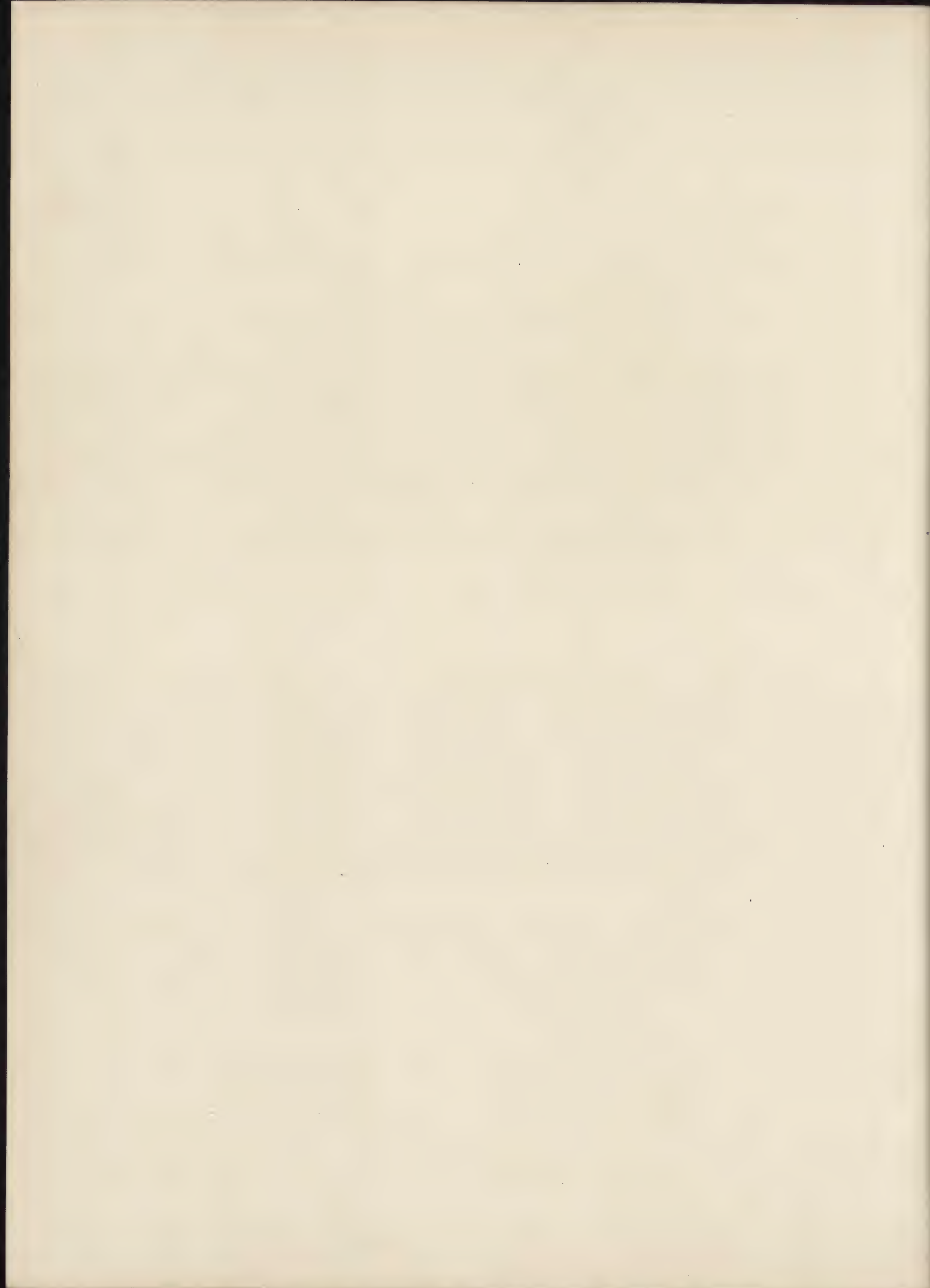
THE GRESLEY JEWEL
(From an Anastatic Drawing)





Gresleys of Drakeelowe

DRAKELOWE
(From the North)

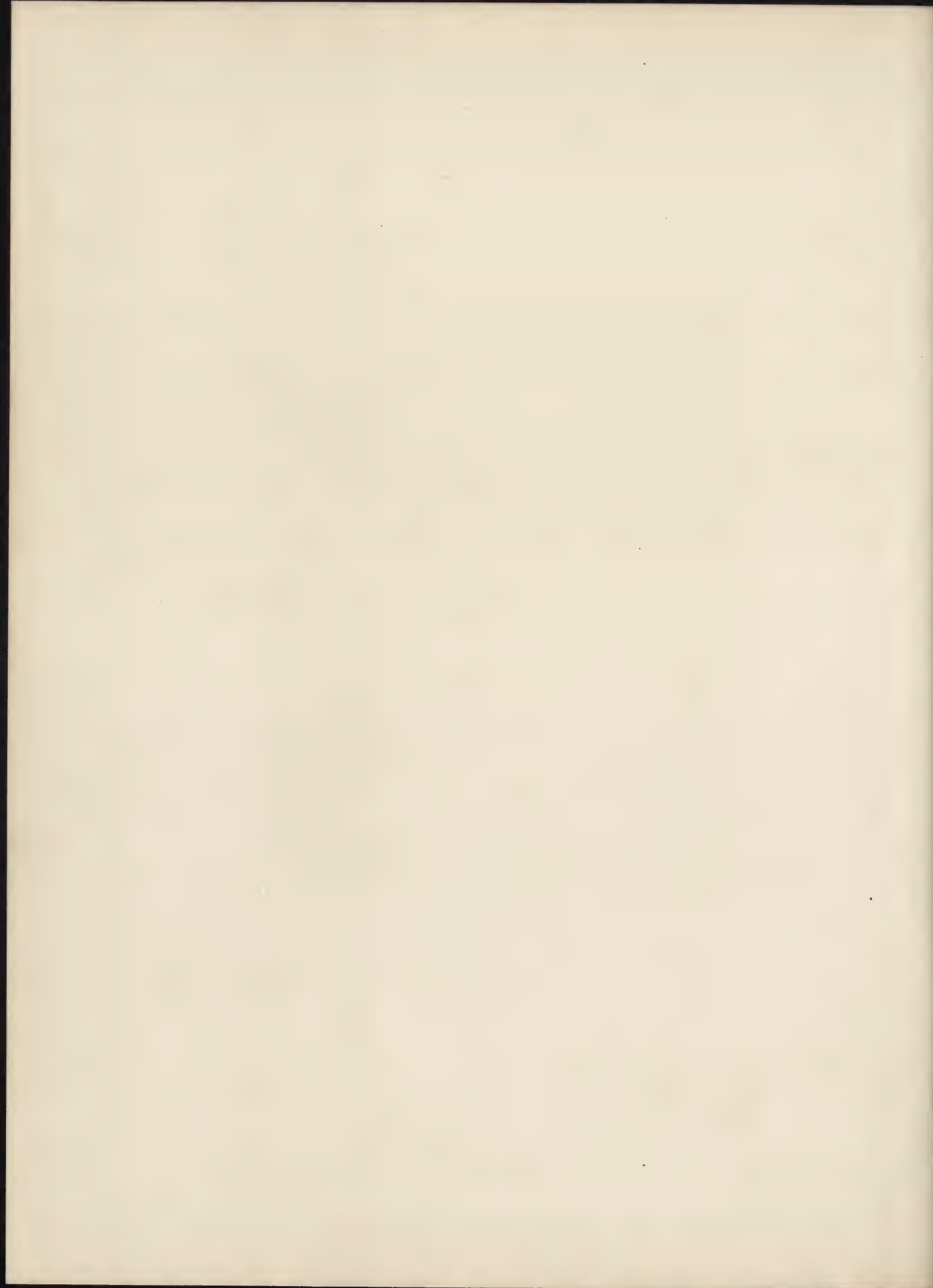




Gresleys of Drakelowe

Plate XL

DR. EDWARD REYNOLDS, BISHOP OF NORWICH
d. 1676





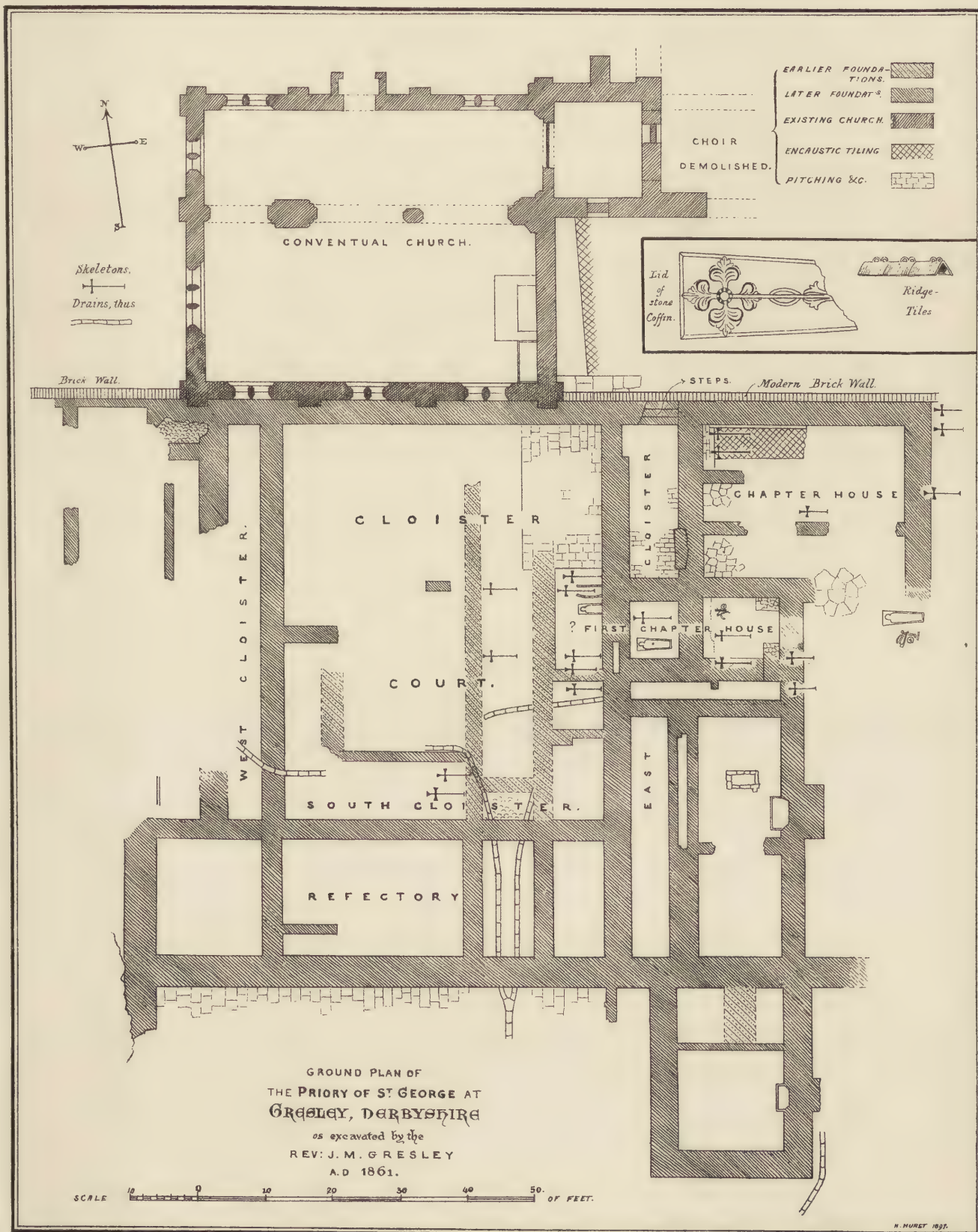
Gresleys of Drakelowe

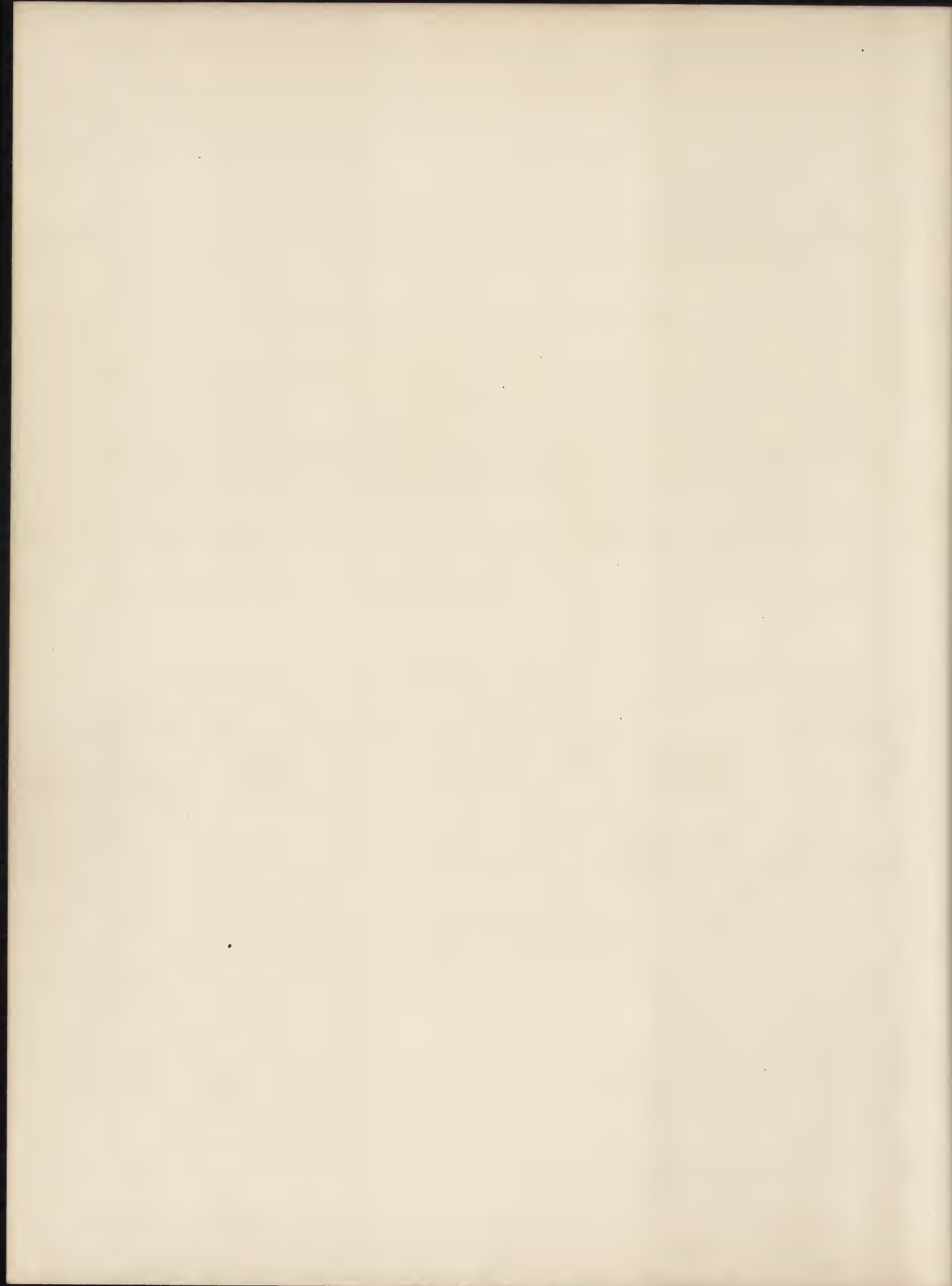
Plate XLI

MRS. REYNOLDS, WIFE OF BISHOP REYNOLDS

From sale, 18th July 1849







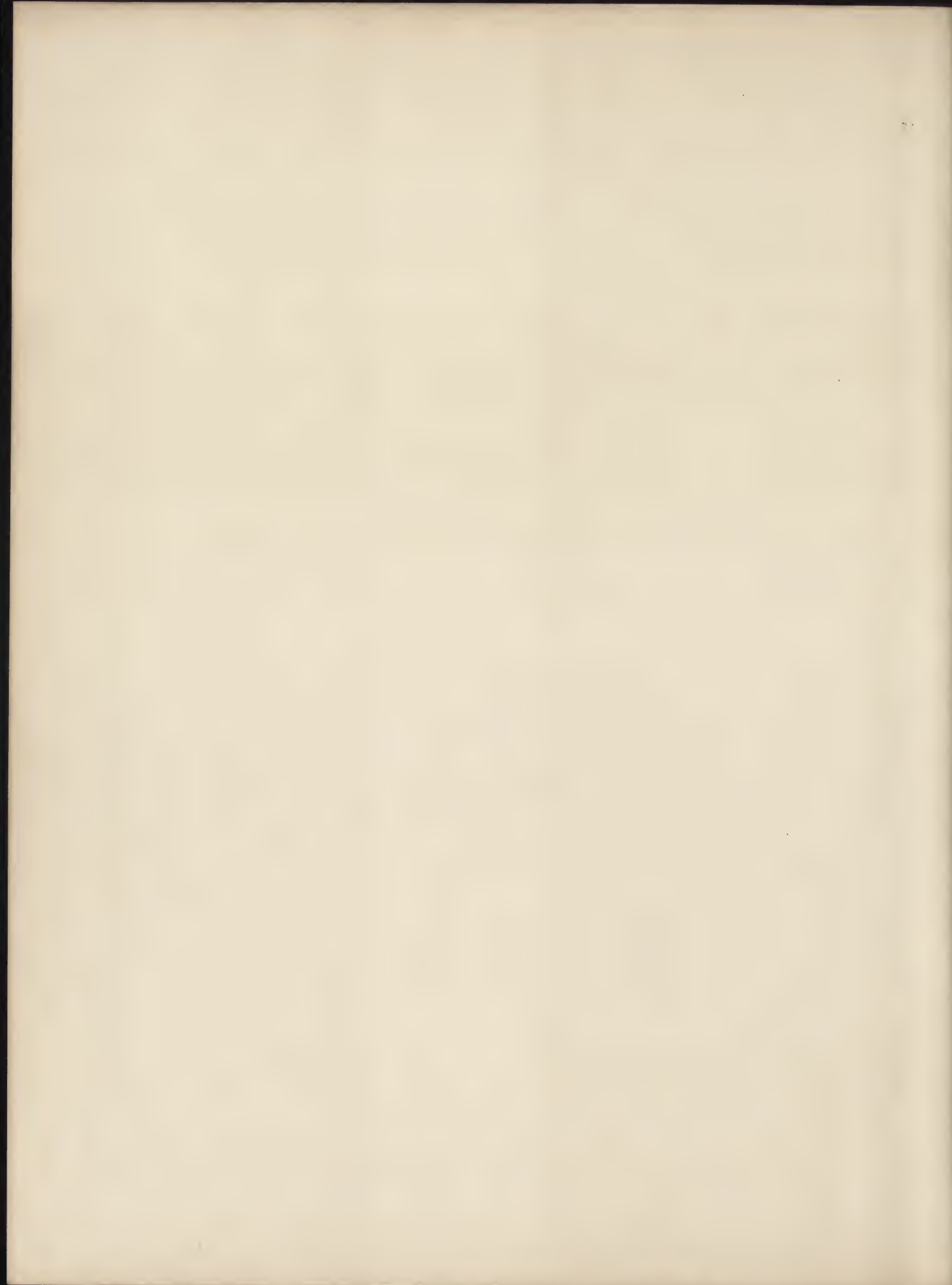


Gresley Church: Derbyshire
 Drawn in Penmanship by Alfred H. Clarke: F.D. 1859: from a sketch by S. Shaw, engraved by Ravenhill: for the
 Topographer: of: October: 1789.

Gresleys of Drakelowe

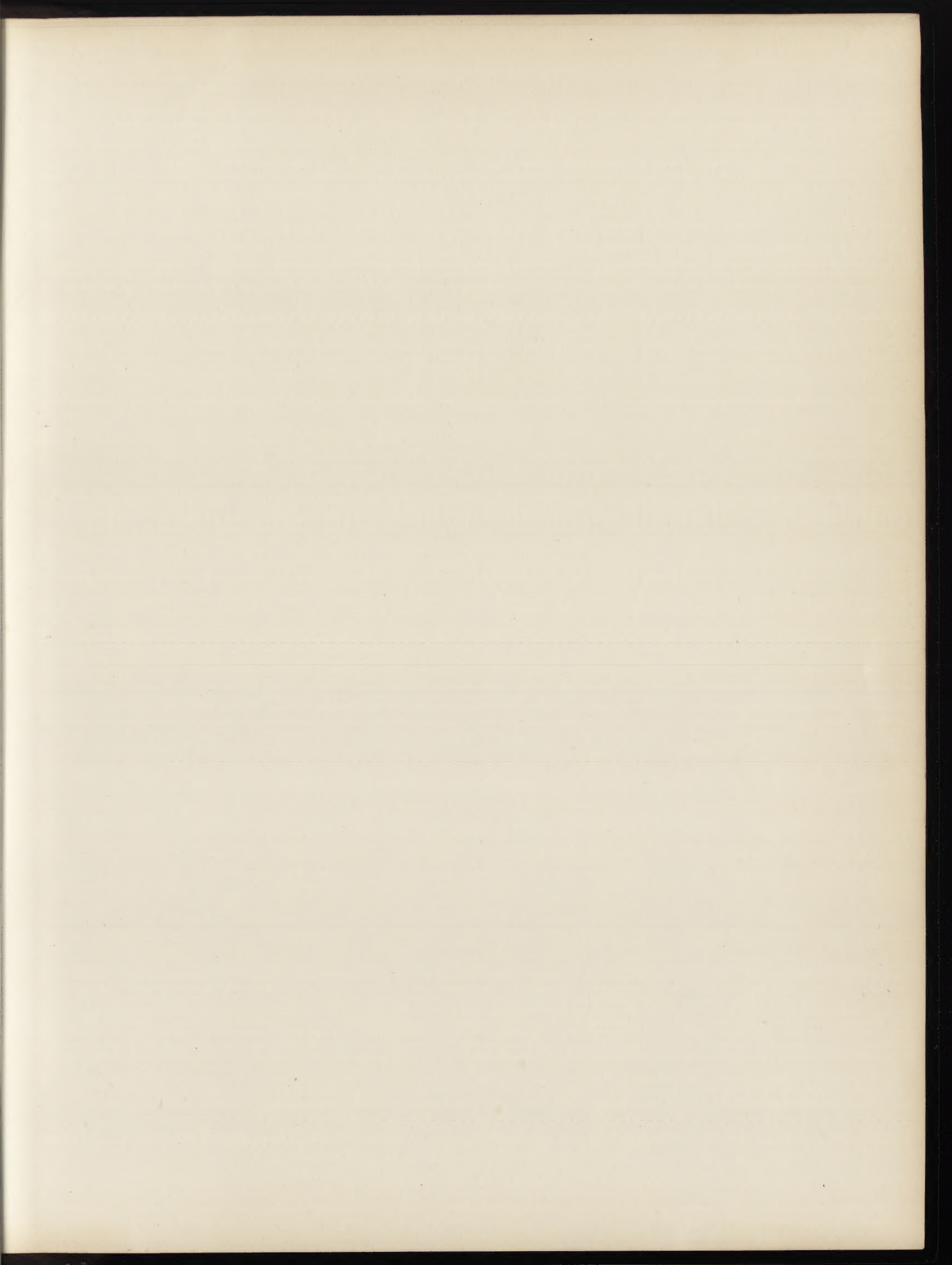
GRESLEY CHURCH

Plate XLIII









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